

MORNING MEDITATION

Thursday, Twenty-sixth Week in Ordinary Time

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness

(Lamentations 3:21 - 23).

Nehemiah 8:1-12

This excerpt tells us that God's word has the power to reveal God's will, change human hearts, transform individuals, cultures and communities and align our will to the will of God. Ezra, the priest, read and interpreted the law for the people and they responded with sorrow and weeping. The people who gathered at the water gate that day became aware of their failures and sinfulness as they listened to God's word. God's word reveals not only God's goodness and love but also our failures and sinfulness.

Ezra did not permit the people to dwell in regret and sorrow. He encouraged them to dwell not on their sinful selves but on the redeeming and liberating word of God, and so to replace their regretting with rejoicing. The people did as Ezra recommended: "then all the people went to eat and drink... and to celebrate with great joy, for they understood the words that had been expounded to them." (8:12)

Let the word of God, which we hear today, move us to a similar shift from regret and repentance to a joyful realization and celebration of the healing, liberating mercies of God.

Psalm 19 - The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul.

Luke 10:1-12

Jesus said to his disciples, "Look, there is a rich harvest....." Jesus looked at a crowd and saw a rich harvest while the Pharisees looked at the same people and found only sinful, unfaithful people worthy of judgment and condemnation. Jesus found people to be gathered, to be brought in and not shut out! The disciples of Jesus are called to maintain a positive attitude toward the world around them and gather people in rather than alienate them; to live a simple life, travel light and not be burdened with stuff that weighs them down; to be bearers of good news, of peace, of God's forgiving love, of God's healing presence.....and never to become a burden to others!.

Saint of the day, October 5 - Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska and 23 other saints are remembered this day.

Helena Kowalska was born in what is now west-central Poland on August 25, 1905. She was the third of 10 children to a poor and religious family. She worked as a housekeeper in three cities to support her family. She approached many different convents, but was turned away every time. Finally, the mother superior for the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy decided to take in Faustina on the condition that she could pay for her own religious habit. Working as a housekeeper, Faustina began to save her money and make deposits to the Convent.

On April 30, 1926, at the age of 20, she finally received her habit and took the religious name of Sister Maria Faustina of the Blessed Sacrament and in 1928, she took her first religious vows as a nun. She worked as a cook, gardener and porter in three of their houses.

On February 22, 1931, Faustina was visited by Jesus, who presented himself as the "King of Divine Mercy" wearing a white garment with red and pale rays coming from his heart. She was asked to become the apostle and secretary of God's mercy, a model of how to be merciful to others, and an instrument for reemphasizing God's plan of mercy for the world.

Sister Maria Faustina died of tuberculosis in Krakow, Poland, on October 5, 1938 and was canonized in April 30, 2000 by Pope John Paul II.

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